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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES
COOPERATING.

STATES RELATIONS SERVICE,
OFFICE OF EXTENSION WORK, SOUTH
(Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work),
WASHINGTON, D. C.

ORGANIZATION OF BOYS' AGRICULTURAL CLUB WORK IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.¹

OBJECTS.

Boys' agricultural club work, organized through the efforts of the Office of Extension Work in the South (Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work) of the States Relations Service, United States Department of Agriculture, working in cooperation with other forces of the South, has, among other objects, the following:

1. To encourage and train boys along the lines of the activities of country life.
2. To put into practice the facts of scientific agriculture obtained from books, bulletins, etc.
3. To bring the school life of the boy into closer relationship to his home life.
4. To assist in the development of the spirit of cooperation in the family and in the community.
5. To dignify and magnify the vocation of the farmer by demonstrating the splendid returns which may be secured from farming when it is properly conducted.
6. To enlarge the vision of the boy and to give him definite purposes at an important period in his life.
7. To furnish to the aggressive, progressive rural school teacher an opportunity to vitalize the work of the school by correlating the teaching of agriculture with actual practice.

CORN CLUBS.

Corn was selected for the first demonstrations, because it is a plant that can be profitably produced in most sections of the United States. The boys throughout the country have common knowledge of it from childhood, and the lessons seem easy (see fig. 1). Corn yields more food to the acre in most sections of the United States, when properly handled, than any other grain crop. Food for men and animals is one of the first necessities. Cheapness of production is an important item. The growing of more and better corn in the South is necessary for better farm conditions. It forms part of a proper rotation for soil building and will furnish feed for a more extended live-stock industry. It is the foundation crop for home use in most of the Southern States. Its more extensive growth will encourage diversification.

KAFIR, MILO MAIZE, AND FETERITA CLUBS.

In addition to corn clubs, it has been found to be wise to organize other clubs. In western Oklahoma and Texas, where corn is not adapted to the climate, it has been found advisable to organize boys in kafir, milo maize, and feterita clubs. One acre is the unit for these clubs.

COTTON CLUBS.

Cotton is a standard crop in the South and in any system of diversified farming must occupy an important place. Therefore a few cotton clubs have been organized for the purpose of teaching boys how to make the greatest yields at the lowest cost. Hereafter the unit of acreage for cotton will be 1 acre.

¹ The administration of agricultural club work should be adapted by the offices in charge to local conditions.

PEANUT CLUBS.

In 1914 peanut clubs were organized in Virginia. These clubs proved to be quite successful. In the future these clubs will be organized throughout the territory adapted to the growing of peanuts. The unit of acreage in peanut clubs is 1 acre.

POTATO CLUBS.

Potato clubs should be organized wherever there is a demand for them. The unit of acreage in potato clubs is one-eighth of an acre.

PIG, POULTRY, AND BABY BEEF CLUBS.

In cooperation with the Bureau of Animal Industry there have been organized pig, poultry, and baby beef clubs. In a number of States the Bureau of Animal Industry has placed a



FIG. 1.—A Kentucky corn club boy in his well-cultivated acre of corn.

specialist to cooperate with the agents of the Office of Extension Work in the South (Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work) in the pig and poultry club work.

Other agricultural clubs may be organized to serve the needs of communities in which they are located. It is thought best, however, not to multiply clubs.

HOW BOYS' AGRICULTURAL CLUBS ARE ORGANIZED.

Arrangements have been made for active cooperation with the extension divisions of the agricultural colleges, and, where local conditions will permit, with State and county superintendents of education and others.

After enrollment of the club members a meeting or meetings of the boys interested should be held, either at the courthouse or at some central place in the country, for the purpose of

instruction and organization. Efforts will be made by the county farm demonstration agent to get in touch with every boy through a system of group meetings for the purpose of instruction. The cooperation of the school authorities is necessary for this purpose. Such meetings should be held in ample time to give instructions regarding the preparation of soil (see fig. 2), selection of seed, fertilizers to be used, methods of planting, cultivating, harvesting, etc. It is estimated that a series of these meetings for each county, held at three different times in the year, will be sufficient to give ample instructions to the boys.

The best results are generally obtained when the following plans are followed in a county:

1. The local teacher organizes the club and sends the names and addresses of the boys to the county agent of the farmers' cooperative demonstration work. In case there is no county agent in the county, the teacher sends the enrollment to the county superintendent of education.

2. The county agent, in cooperation with the county superintendent of education, directs the work in the county, holds county meetings, formulates the county rules, and settles all



FIG. 2.—Deep plowing and the thorough preparation of the seed bed aided Sherman Hall, a corn club boy, in making 107.33 bushels of corn on his acre.

county contests. He receives the names and addresses of the boys from the local teachers, makes copy of the same for his office, and sends copy of names and addresses, arranged alphabetically, to the county superintendent of education and to the State agent in charge of boys' agricultural clubs. When there is no demonstration agent in the county the county superintendent sends names and addresses to the State agent in charge of boys' agricultural clubs.

Blanks for enrollment will be furnished to the local agents and to superintendents, teachers, and other county leaders in this work.

CLASSIFICATION OF CLUBS.

It is important to classify the club membership with reference to the number of activities engaged in, as, for example, class A, boys engaging in one activity; class B, those engaging in two lines of work; class C, those following three lines; class D, those following four lines, and so on.

HOW THE CLUBS ARE INSTRUCTED.

1. The county demonstration agent is the instructor of the county club on the plats of the members. He should give instructions on the preparation and fertilization of the soil, selection of the seed (see fig. 3) to be used, cultivation of crops, and assist in obtaining correct results at the time of harvesting. He should assist the boys in every way possible. He should be assisted by the county superintendent of education in the enrollment of members.

2. The school officials should have a sympathetic attitude toward the work at all times. They should assist the boy in selecting and measuring his land, help him to understand the bulletins, circular letters, etc., on the growing of his crop, visit his plat from time to time, encourage him to do his best, and see that correct measurements are made at the time of harvesting.



FIG. 3.—Corn club boys selecting seed corn in the field for next year's planting.

3. Parents should assist their boys in all legitimate ways and encourage them to follow instructions closely. Under no circumstances should parents attempt to hinder the boy in carrying out the instructions given by the county agent.

ROTATION OF CROPS.

Crop rotation is of the greatest importance in maintaining soil fertility. It is essential, therefore, in teaching a better system of agriculture in the club work, that boys be led away from the "one-crop" system. Too frequently boys plant the same acre to corn or other crop year after year, thus putting into practice the very system which has impoverished the lands of the South. Therefore we earnestly insist that crop rotation, with leguminous plants in the rotation, be practiced by all boys belonging to corn clubs. The same crop should not be planted on the same acre two years in succession. The following two-year rotations, or a modification

of the same, will be found suited to conditions in the territory of the Office of Extension Work in the South:

First year.—Corn, with cowpeas or soy beans, followed by winter cover crop of oats or rye, with clover or vetch, to be turned under.

Second year.—Cowpeas or soy beans or peanuts, to be followed by winter crops (see fig. 4), to be turned under, returning to corn the third year. If a boy must use the same acre for corn the second year, he should certainly put a winter cover crop on it.

PRIZES AND PREMIUMS.

It is suggested that prizes be offered for the best results the second year with peanuts, cowpeas, soy beans, or velvet beans, as a money crop on an acre which has been in corn the year before. Of course the winter cover crops will be plowed under.



FIG. 4.—Corn club boys who planted a winter cover crop of crimson clover to turn under on their demonstration acres.

If the merchants and other public-spirited citizens have been visited and the work explained to them before the organization of the clubs, it will be found comparatively easy to raise a fund to cover the expense of giving prizes to the successful contestants. Thousands of dollars have been contributed in this way during the past few years. It must be understood that the United States Department of Agriculture does not furnish any money for prizes and is not offering prizes. In the extension work in the South it is found that considerable interest can be added by securing offers of prizes from public-spirited citizens of the community or State. The chief prize in each State should be a year's expenses in an agricultural high school or college. The following additional prizes are suggested and have been offered in various States and localities:

Trips to expositions, State and county fairs; scholarships in short courses in agricultural colleges and schools (see fig. 5); different kinds of farm vehicles and implements; registered pigs; pure-bred chickens; fine colts; registered calves; bicycles; shotguns; watches; articles of clothing; books on agriculture and horticulture; cash prizes, from \$2 up to \$20, etc.

It is better to offer many small prizes than a few large ones, as it furthers the interest if recognition and honor can be given for the excellent records of as many boys as possible. Some boards of trade and chambers of commerce have made direct appropriations for prizes and some have shown their recognition of the efforts of the clubs by giving the boys banquets and entertaining them at their meetings at the county seats with street car rides, and at fairs and on other occasions clubs have been honored by being invited to march or appear in parades, attracting great attention. In some States the boys have been entertained in private homes



FIG. 5.—Members of boys' corn clubs attending short course.

during the time of the State fair or corn show, thus stimulating friendly and intimate relations between the rural and urban population. It is a good plan to offer prizes to community clubs which will make the best records with teams of 10 to 20 boys. In this way the results are better and the prizes more generally distributed.

CIRCULARS AND BULLETINS.

Circulars of instruction on the preparation of the seed beds, the value and uses of home and commercial fertilizers, planting, cultivation, seed selection, etc., will be mailed to all the boys enrolled. From time to time circular letters calling special attention to various steps in raising their crops will be mailed to each of the boys. The circulars mentioned furnish excellent subject matter for discussion at club meetings or in schools. The United States Department of Agriculture and the colleges publish annually a large number of bulletins which contain most valuable information on many subjects of interest to farmers. From time to time the

attention of the members of the club will be called to timely Farmers' Bulletins, which may be had free of charge upon request. Many of the boys study these bulletins and circulars and profit by the lessons and discussions because they are making practical application of the principles taught. The boy learns scientific agriculture because he needs it and not because it is scientific. A boy who has joined the boys' agricultural clubs and fails to receive the circulars of instruction on these various subjects should notify the State agent in charge of agricultural club work in his State, so that the error may be corrected.

The boys will also be furnished with crop-record blanks, detailing a method of keeping an account of the expense of production and specifying the steps to be taken in growing their crops.

RULES OF AWARD.

It is not necessary to have many rules; the fewer the better. A few simple regulations, however, are necessary, in order to prevent misunderstandings and conflicts. It is well for the boys to elect their own president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer, either in clubs or in county organizations. It is often helpful if these officers, with one or two additional interested parties, constitute an executive committee.

The following rules should be adopted by the clubs, with such modifications to suit local conditions as may be found necessary:

1. Boys entering clubs and entering contests must be between 10 and 18 years of age on January 1 of any given year.
2. No boy should be allowed to contest for a prize unless he becomes a member of the club and agrees to submit his reports.
3. Members of the clubs must agree to study the instructions of the Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work.
4. Each boy must plan his own crop and do his own work; if a small boy, from 10 to 14 years, he may hire help for heavy plowing in the preparation of the soil. The hearty cooperation of the father of the boy is of great value.
5. Exhibits of 10 ears of corn, accompanied by a written report and a written account, showing the history of the crop, must be made at a place designated for the purpose in the county. Such exhibits may be held on a given day, either at the county fair, or, if no fair is held in the county, at the courthouse or some other convenient place.
6. The land upon which the boy's crop is made must be carefully measured and the corn weighed in the presence of two disinterested witnesses, who shall attest the boy's certificate. This certificate must show that the plat contains 4,840 square yards. The crop must grow upon the acre.
7. The entire crop of corn from the acre in the husk should be weighed when it is in a dry condition. Then weigh out 100 pounds separately. Husk and shell this 100 pounds and weigh the shelled corn. Multiply the weight of all the corn in the husk by the weight of this shelled corn. Point off the two right-hand figures and divide by 56. The result will be the yield in bushels of shelled corn. In every case where there is a prospective yield of 100 bushels or more, notice should be sent to the State agent in charge of boys' clubs in the State. A moisture-tight container will be sent for a sample of the corn, which will be taken before witnesses, as directed in the circular which will be forwarded to the contestant. This container should be sent by mail, under a frank which will accompany it, to the Office of Grain Standardization, Bureau of Plant Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., where a moisture test will be made. This test is made in order to reduce all high yields to an even standard. The Office of Grain Standardization allows 14 per cent of moisture in No. 1 corn. Under this plan the same laboratory will make the tests for all the boys, and fair treatment is thus guaranteed.
8. The club acre must be all in one body.
9. In awarding prizes the following basis should be used in corn, cotton, and peanut clubs:

	Per cent.
(a) Greatest yield per acre.....	30
(b) Best exhibit.....	20
(c) Best written account, showing history of the crop and how to select seed.....	20
(d) Best showing of profit on investment based on the commercial price of crop.....	30

The following basis of award may be used for a limited territory where the contests are on poor land:

	Per cent.
(a) For percentage of increase.....	30
(b) For profit.....	30
(c) For exhibit.....	20
(d) For history.....	20

In such cases a disinterested committee, or a demonstration agent, determines what would be the normal yield of the acre when turned over to the boy. In order that boys who have good land may not be debarred from State-wide competition an additional 30 points for yield may be added to the above. Within the limited territory the 30 points for percentage of increase would obtain, while in the State the 30 points for yield would be used.

Basis of award in potato clubs:

	Per cent.
(a) Greatest yield.....	40
(b) Best showing of profit on investment.....	30
(c) Best exhibit.....	15
(d) Best history on how I made my crop of potatoes.....	15

An exhibit of corn consists of 10 ears; of kafir, milo maize, or feterita, 5 heads; of cotton, 2 pounds of seed cotton and 10 open bolls; of peanuts, 1 peck of cleaned nuts and 10 vines; of potatoes, 1 peck of seed potatoes.

In estimating the profits, uniform prices should be used. For instance, \$5 per acre, or \$1 for one-eighth of an acre, for land rental; 10 cents per hour for the work of each boy, and 5 cents per hour for each horse; \$2 for a two-horse load of stable manure, weighing about a

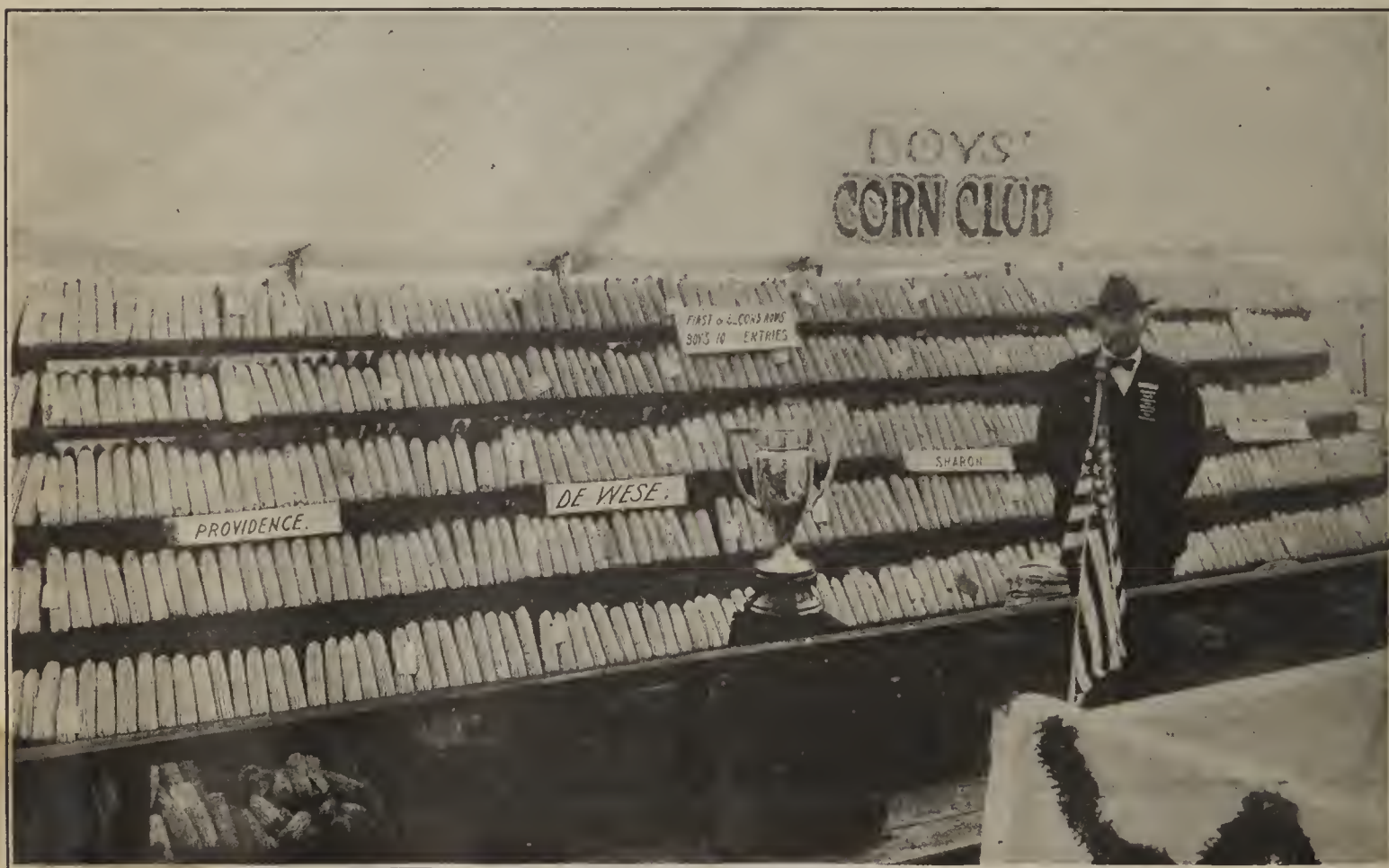


FIG. 6.—Boys' corn club exhibit.

ton; \$1 for a one-horse load of manure, weighing about half a ton; and the market price for commercial fertilizer. This plan of cost accounting has the advantage of great simplicity, but other methods of accounting may be adopted by special arrangement.

BADGES AND EMBLEMS.

An emblem or badge has been designed for the boys' agricultural clubs, consisting of a book for the background, with a four-leaf clover and a kernel of corn, or boll of cotton, or potato, on the book. The word "demonstrator" appears at the top of the book and the words "Boys' corn, cotton, or potato clubs" at the bottom. Four "H's" appear, one upon each of the leaves

of the four-leaf clover. The book is intended to emphasize the necessity of education and definite knowledge of farm and home interests for better country life. The kernel of corn, or boll of cotton, or potato, denotes the crop being raised, and the clover leaf combined with it is an emblem of the necessity of scientific training, rotation of crops, soil building, and consequent larger education. The four "H's" signify the training of the head, hands, heart, and health, which are essential to the well-rounded life. The word "demonstrator" has the same meaning as in the work with the farmer and signifies that every club member is a demonstrator of the better methods of modern agriculture. These badges or pins are not given out by the Department of Agriculture. They are often furnished free to members by those interested in the clubs,



FIG. 7.—Sherman Hall, a member of a boys' corn club in Arkansas, secured by proper preparation and cultivation a yield of 107.33 bushels of corn on his demonstration acre.

especially as a reward for excellent work during the season in raising their crops. The cost is very small. In some counties the use of these pins has proved of assistance when given as a prize to every member who raises a crop and makes a final report and exhibit.

ALL-STAR CORN CLUB.

The All-Star Corn Club of the United States in the future will be made up of boys who make 100 or more bushels of corn on their acres. They and the prize winners, who have come to Washington in the past, alone, are entitled to wear the "all-star" emblem. The all-star boys should receive certificates from the extension divisions of the agricultural colleges.

The requirements for membership in the All-Star Corn Club are uniform throughout the United States by arrangement between the offices concerned. As indicated above, a special badge has been designed for boys in this club. Special contests should be arranged for members of the All-Star Corn Clubs on a larger acreage.

FAIRS AND EXHIBITS.

Where there is a county fair the boys' exhibits (see fig. 6, p. 8) should be made there, if possible. Where there is no county fair the exhibits should be collected at the courthouse or some other public place. Exhibits of this sort often lead to the establishment of a county fair, and they stimulate the work and give splendid opportunities for general instruction. Although the club exhibit starts with corn, its development naturally leads to the exhibition of other farm and garden products.

RESULTS.

The object of the boys' demonstration work is the same as that among men—viz, to secure the adoption of better methods of farming and greater yields (see fig. 7, p. 9) at less cost. Many of the boys in the clubs who begin to study agriculture in this way will continue the study in the agricultural colleges; others will continue such efforts on their farms, and all of them will make more useful and more efficient citizens. From the pleasant and profitable experience of owning and managing their small plats they will develop into independent, intelligent farmers. The country needs these farmers, and such a life offers great opportunities. The professions are crowded and the wage earners must pay high prices for the necessities of life. The wise and judicious producer can enjoy health, wealth, and contentment. Success in this work is good training for usefulness in any line. The question is, how many boys can be reached and influenced thus to succeed?

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